

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS STATE 155124

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, IN

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL PROTEST REGARDING EXPULSION OF CORRESPONDENT SIMONS

1. DEP ASST SEC DUBS LODGED OFFICIAL PROTEST REGARDING EXPULSION OF WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT LEWIS M. SIMONS WITH INDIAN EMBASSY DCM GONSALVES MORNING OF JULY 1.

2. FOLLOWING ARE COMMENTS MADE TO GONSALVES IN THIS CONNECTION:

A. AS YOU KNOW, DAVID SCHNEIDER WHEN HE WAS CHARGE AND MORE RECENTLY PAUL KREISBERG OUR POLCOUNS EXPRESSED OUR STRONG REGRETS, RESPECTIVELY, TO FONSEC KEWAL SINGH ON JUNE 26 AND JOINT SECRETARY TEJA ON JUNE 30 REGARDING THE EXPULSION OF WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT LEWIS M. SIMONS.

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B. USG AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL POLICY REGRETS ANY ABRIDGEMENT OF THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION WHEREVER IT MAY OCCUR.

C. WE VIEW THE EXPULSION OF SIMONS IN THOSE TERMS AND,

ACCORDINGLY, AND ON INSTRUCTIONS, WE WISH TO REGISTER OUR OFFICIAL PROTEST OVER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S ACTION AGAINST SIMONS.

3. DUBS NOTED THAT WE WOULD INFORM CORRESPONDENTS AT DEPARTMENT'S PRESS BRIEFING, IF ASKED, THAT WE HAVE LODGED AN OFFICIAL PROTEST OVER THE SIMONS EXPULSION WITH THE INDIAN EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON AND THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN TAKEN UP BY OUR EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS THERE.

4. GONSALVES SAID THAT HE ASSUMED THAT THE STATEMENT MADE BY DUBS WAS CONSISTENT WITH THE USG'S REACTION TO THE EXPULSION OF U.S. JOURNALISTS ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD AND THAT INDIA WAS NOT BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY BEING SINGLED OUT IN THE SIMONS CASE. DUBS EMPHASIZED THAT THE USG FEELS STRONGLY REGARDING THE EXPULSION OF U.S. JOURNALISTS WHEREVER SUCH INCIDENTS MIGHT OCCUR AND HAS PROTESTED SUCH ACTIONS IN OTHER INSTANCES. GONSALVES SAID THAT THE INDIAN EMBASSY HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE WASHINGTON POST AND THAT MATTERS WERE BEING WORKED OUT RATHER AMICABLY SINCE THE WASHINGTON POST IS INTERESTED IN ACCREDITING ANOTHER JOURNALIST TO NEW DELHI. INGERSOLL

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